



<b>Subject:</b>	Comber Greenway
<b>Date:</b>	10 January 2017
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Gerry Millar, Director of Property & Projects Nigel Grimshaw, Director City & Neighbourhood Services Department
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Rose Crozier, Assistant Director City & Neighbourhood Services Department

<b>Is this report restricted?</b>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>Is the decision eligible for Call-in?</b>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues</b>
1.1	To seek Committee position in regard to the notice of motion proposing that the Council works collectively with the Department of Infrastructure (DoI) to develop a strategic political and costed plan for the Comber Greenway on part of the recently launched Strategic Plan for Greenways within Northern Ireland.
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
2.1	The Committee is asked to; <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Agree the actions as outlined in Paragraph 3.9.</li></ul>
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Main report</b>
3.1	Officers recognise the well being benefits of Greenways and how they are an important element in supporting a number of the main strands of the Belfast Agenda.
3.2	Not only do Greenways support the Living Here element of the Belfast Agenda, particularly in regard to enhancement of health both physical and mental, but also support City Development in terms of attractiveness and can also contribute to Growing the Economy element if the tourism potential of Greenways is properly exploited.

3.3.	<p>BCC is just finishing off the Connswater Community Greenway for which the Council part funded, assembled the necessary land, procured and managed the construction project, engaged with all other funders and the community and will now take on the management and maintenance of the CCG in conjunction with local groups.</p>
3.4	<p>Beside our learning and experience regard to this £30m plus project, QUB also obtained major research funding to undertaken a long term study of the health impacts of living close to a Greenway. Some early results from East Belfast are very encouraging so we have both anecdotal and well researched evidence on the benefit of Greenways.</p>
3.5	<p>The Comber Greenway already of course exists and runs across three Council areas, Ards and North Down, Lisburn Castlereagh and of course Belfast where it crosses the Connswater Greenway at the recently completed CS Lewis Square.</p>
3.6	<p>In Belfast, the Comber Greenway comes into the city as far as Dee Street. There is a possibility of a cycle connection to the city centre via the Belfast Bikes for which Urban Villages capital money is available although the Council at present is having difficulty in covering maintenance cost of any new Belfast Bikes.</p>
3.7	<p>The maintenance of the Comber Greenway particularly in the Urban area is not that great at present and with all such public assets it needs an agency that will give it sufficient priority and resources to make it remain viable.</p>
3.8	<p>As the notice of motion clearly states, the Comber Greenway is fully the responsibility of Dol, three Council areas are involved and while the benefits of the Greenway are clear, the bottom line in terms of maximising those benefits will come down to resources both money and people (including voluntary groups).</p>
3.9	<p>To move this motion forward, the following actions are suggested;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="308 1718 1453 1800">i. BCC meets with Dol officials to get a clear picture of their commitment to the Comber Greenway within their strategy and report that position to Committee.</li><li data-bbox="308 1816 1453 1951">ii. If positive, aim to create a Steering Group with Dol and the other Councils. If the other Councils are not interested the Steering Group to focus on the Belfast section only.</li></ul>

	<p>iii. The aim of the Steering Group is to develop a costed plan for the Comber Greenway that clearly identifies contributions and responsibilities.</p> <p>iv. If DoI do not engage positively then the motion will have to be reconsidered.</p> <p><b>Resources</b></p> <p>3.10 The main resource commitment at this stage would be officer time with a proposal that the City and Neighbourhoods Department provides a named officer to take this forward and that the Property &amp; Projects Department provides a Project Sponsor to support the development of a business case and project plan.</p> <p>3.11 <u>Financial &amp; Resource Implications</u>  Future costs are obviously unknown at this stage but will be liable on whoever retains ownership and liability, which is currently DoI.</p> <p>3.12 <u>Equality or Good Relations Implications</u>  None.</p>
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Appendices – Documents Attached</b>
4.1	None